**PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL REPORT TO LOWER HUTT SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB – NOVEMBER 2024**

I am delighted to present this 70th Annual Report for the 2024 season - and what a year it has been!

Our 70th year was upon us and while the hall and band had already been booked, planning for the evening began in earnest, culminating in an amazing evening on 7 September. Everything came together as planned, due largely to our Secretary Elizabeth’s meticulous record keeping over many years. We invited past members, who were no longer dancing and it was great to see them interacting with current dancers and even joining in the dancing. The music from Wild Heather (Lynne Scott, Sharlene Penman, Anne-Marie Forsyth and Mary McDonald was amazing. The programme, put together by Andrea Wells and Chris Totton included some old favourite Lower Hutt dances, which again brought back memories for those who have been with the Club for a while.

We were also asked to consider hosting the New Dancers Celebration, just 6 weeks after our 70th, in conjunction with the Upper Hutt Club (next on the alphabetical list to host and who felt their membership was too low to arrange on their own). A small committee of Upper and Lower Hutt members got together to plan this event. Once again, we excelled with great preparation, well thought out programme and a theme that merged the Upper Hutt Fantail and Lower Hutt Kowhai logos. 19 sets took the floor at the beginning of the evening, with 18 most of the remainder of the night. Dancers from as far afield as Ashhurst, Whanganui, Levin and Wairarapa enjoyed the music of Strings Attached (Lynne Scott, Sharlene Penman and Richard Hardie).Hardie). Chris Kelly from Upper Hutt and Chris Totten and Andrea Wells, Lower Hutt, shared the MCing.

New Zealand Summer School was also planned for Wellington this year and Clubs in the Region received requests for contributions. As well as our amazing teachers taking classes at the School, we were asked to host Hogmanay, so here we go again, albeit in a lower key way. We will be providing the MC and our teachers to brief dances, while at the same time manning the door and setting up supper.

Iain Matcham has tutored the children’s class this year, starting with healthy numbers of 12 young dancers, but by the end of the year, the numbers had fallen to five. Iain is not certain he will continue into 2025. Young people are our future and we welcome suggestions for how we continue to nurture this group.

The family nights have not been as well attended this year and we didn’t hold the planned September School Holiday one because of our commitments to the NDC. We may need to rethink this format.

The mid winter evening, with music from Jason Morris and Hilary Ferral was again a fun night although we were disappointed that dancers from invited Clubs were not evident. The mulled wine and Christmas cake obviously wasn’t a drawcard!

I simply could not have done the job of President without the support of our Secretary, Elizabeth Ferguson. The job has been extremely busy this year and she has continued to produce her weekly newsletters, (which are emailed even to those who are not currently dancing). I cannot thank her enough for her support.

Thank you all for being part of this momentous year in the Club’s history. I look forward to dancing again in 2025.

Janice Henson

President